

Thomas Jefferson to Benjamin H. Latrobe, April 9, 1804, from Thomas Jefferson and the National Capital. Edited by Saul K. Padover.

Jefferson to Latrobe

Monticello Apr. 9. 04.

Dear Sir

I received three days ago your favor of Mar. 29 and have taken the first leisure moment to consider it's contents & the drawings they refer to, and I approve generally of the several distribution of both the floors, with some exceptions which shall be noted below. But we must for the present defer whatever is external in the North wall of the South wing, that is to say, the vestibule, the speaker's chamber, the withdrawing room, for the members and the coridor & staircase between them; 1st because all our efforts will be not more than sufficient to finish the South wing in 2 summers & 2dly for a more absolute reason that the object of this appropriation is to finish the wing. there having been no idea in the legislature of doing any thing part of the middle building. For the present, a temporary staircase may be put up in the place of the Vestibule & upper coridor. I perceive that the Doric order for the Representative's chamber must be given up on account of the difficulty of accomodating it's metop[e] & triglyph to the intercolonnations resulting from the periphery of the room: and as the Senate chamber is Ionic, we must make this Corinthian, & do the best we can for the capitals & modillions. I suppose that this will be the best. The following are the exceptions, or rather the doubts, as to some of the details of the plans. I have approved the Speaker's chamber & Drawing room for the members: would it not be better to assign for the [illegible] the Sergeant's room, & for the [illegible] [illegible]? on the lower floor would it not be better to convert the lobbies of the [illegible] & representatives rooms,

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opening from the Antichambers, and let the entry to the staircase [illegible] [illegible] be directly thro' the corner window adjacent to it? a [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] refer [illegible] I think less than the semicircle would be enough. I return you the drawings and pray you to push the works with all the force which can be employed in the order proposed in my last letter to you. Accept my friendly salutations & assurances of respect.

Th: Jefferson

Mr. Latrobe

[Ms., *Jefferson Papers*, Library of Congress.]